



9. The method of claim 4 wherein the cheese is centrifuged at a force of from about 10g about 2000 g.

5 10. The method of claim 4 wherein a centrifugal force is applied for a time period of from about 0.1 minutes to about 10 minutes.

10 11. The method of claim 1 wherein the cheese provided is selected from the group consisting of enzyme-modified cheese, hard cheese, soft cheese, semi-soft cheese, and part-skim cheese.

15 12. The method of claim 1 wherein the cheese provided is selected from the group consisting of cold pack cheese food, cold-pack cheese, and club cheese.

20 13. The method of claim 1 wherein the cheese provided is selected from the group consisting of Asiago cheese, blue cheese, brick cheese, Swiss cheese, Edam cheese, Gouda cheese, Muenster cheese, Mozzarella cheese, Parmesan cheese, Provolone cheese, Romano cheese, American cheese, Cheddar cheese, Colby cheese, Monterey Jack cheese, wash curd cheese and stirred curd cheese.

25 14. The method of claim 1 further comprising adding an aqueous phase from a previous processing sequence to the cheese prior to or while warming and stirring.

30 15. The method of claim 1 further comprising providing at least one ingredient selected from the group consisting of butterfat, vegetable fat, salt, and additives and blending the at least one ingredient with the cheese product to produce a fortified cheese.

16. The method of claim 15 further comprising providing water and blending the water and the at least one ingredient with the cheese product to produce a fortified cheese.

17. The method of claim 1 further comprising reducing the cheese in size prior to stirring by a method selected from the group consisting of milling, grinding, dicing, cubing, slicing, chopping and shredding.

18. A cheese product made by the method of claim 1.

~~19.~~ A method of manufacturing cheese with a reduced fat content, the method comprising:

a) providing cheese containing fat;

b) warming the cheese to at least 150°F and stirring the cheese to form an aqueous phase, a butterfat phase, and a cheese product;

c) separating the phases, wherein a cheese product remains, said cheese product having at least a portion of said fat removed;

d) providing at least one ingredient selected from the group consisting of water, butterfat, salt, and nutrients; and

e) blending the at least one ingredient with the cheese product to form said cheese with reduced fat content.

20. The method of claim 19 further comprising removing water from the aqueous phase for use as a cheese flavoring product.

21. The method of claim 19 further comprising adding an aqueous phase from a previous processing sequence to the cheese prior to or while warming and stirring.

22. A cheese with a reduced fat content made by the method of claim 19.

~~23.~~ A method of extracting undesirable flavors in cheese, the method comprising:

a) providing cheese containing fat and having an undesirable flavor;

b) warming the cheese to at least 130°F and stirring the cheese;

c) adding water to the cheese before or while warming the cheese:

24. The method of claim 23 further comprising blending the cheese product with at least one ingredient selected from the group consisting of water, butterfat, vegetable fat, salt, and nutrients.

25. The method of claim 23 wherein the cheese is warmed to a temperature of from about 140° F to about 212° F.

26. The method of claim 23 wherein the cheese is warmed to a temperature of from about 165° F to about 190° F.

27. The method of claim 23 wherein the water is added to the cheese in a weight ratio of from 1 part of water to 100 parts of cheese, to about 1 part of water to 1 part of cheese.

29. The method of claim 23 wherein said cheese is centrifuged at a force of from about 10g to about 2000 g.

30. The method of claim 29 wherein a centrifugal force is applied for a time period of from about 0.1 minutes to about 10 minutes.

31. The method of claim 23 wherein steps b) through e) are repeated on the cheese product to further reduce a flavor of the cheese to make a bland cheese product.

32. The method of claim 23 wherein fat extracted from the cheese is added back to the cheese product to produce a full fat cheese.

33. A method of manufacturing a cheese flavor product, the method comprising:

- a) providing an enzyme-modified cheese;
- b) warming the cheese to at least 130°F and stirring the cheese to form an aqueous phase, a butterfat phase, and a cheese product; and
- c) separating the phases by centrifuging, wherein both the aqueous phase and the cheese product constitute cheese flavor products.

34. The method of claim 33 further comprising adding water prior to or during warming and stirring.

35. The method of claim 33 wherein the cheese is warmed to a temperature of from about 140° F to about 212° F.

36. The method of claim 33 wherein the water is added to the cheese in a weight ratio of from about 1 part water to 100 parts of cheese, to about 1 part of water to 1 part of cheese.

37. A cheese flavor product made by the process of claim 33.

38. A cheese product made by fractionating a starting cheese containing fat, wherein the cheese product comprises:

- a) at least 25 percent less fat than the starting cheese; and
- b) wherein a mesophilic bacteria content of the cheese has been deactivated.

39. The cheese product of claim 38 wherein the cheese is selected from the group consisting of Asiago cheese, blue cheese, brick cheese, Swiss cheese, Edam cheese, Gouda cheese, Muenster cheese, Mozzarella cheese, Parmesan cheese, Provolone cheese, Romano cheese, enzyme-modified cheese, American cheese, Cheddar cheese, Colby cheese, Monterey Jack cheese, wash curd cheese, and stirred curd cheese.

40. The cheese product of claim 38 wherein the cheese is selected from the group consisting of enzyme-modified cheese, hard cheese, soft cheese, semi-soft cheese, and part-skim cheese.

41. The cheese product of claim 38 wherein the cheese is selected from the group consisting of cold pack cheese food, cold-pack cheese, and club cheese.

42. The cheese product of claim 38 having a moisture content of fifty five weight percent or less.

43. The cheese product of claim 38 wherein the fat has been reduced at least 50 per cent compared to the starting cheese.

44. The cheese product of claim 38 having a moisture content of sixty weight percent or less.

45. The cheese product of claim 38 having a fat content of less than six percent by weight of the cheese product.

5           46. The cheese product of claim 45 having a moisture content of sixty-five weight percent or less.

~~47.~~ A method of making a cheese-flavored spread, the method comprising:

10           a) fractionating a cheese by warming the cheese to at least 130° F and stirring the cheese to form an aqueous phase, a butterfat phase, and a cheese product; and

          b) mixing the aqueous phase with a fat to produce a cheese-flavored spread.

5           48. The method of claim 47 wherein the fat mixed with the aqueous phase is butterfat, producing a cheese-flavored dairy spread.

20           49. The method of claim 47 wherein the fat mixed with the aqueous phase is vegetable fat, producing a cheese-flavored non-dairy spread.

          50. The method of claim 48 further comprising softening or melting the fat phase by warming before mixing with the aqueous phase.

25           51. The method of claim 47 wherein fractionating the cheese is accomplished by centrifuging at a force of from about 10 g to about 2000 g.

30           52. The method of claim 47 further comprising adding water to the cheese in a weight ratio of from about 1 part water to 100 parts of cheese, to about 1 part of water to 1 part of cheese.